REMARKS

Claims 22 through 40 are now presented for examination. Claims 34 through 37 have been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer of subject matter. Claims 22-24 and 28-33 been amended to define still more clearly what Applicant regards as his invention, in terms which distinguish over the art of record. Claims 38 through 40 have been added to assure Applicant of the full measure of protection to which he deems himself entitled. Claims 22 and 28 are the only independent claims.

Claims 28 through 33 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, for failing to point out and distinctly claim applicant's invention. In particular, Claim 28 has been objected to in that the term "processing system" is not understood as to what is included and/or excluded. With regard to Claim 28 as currently amended, this rejection is respectfully traversed. As currently amended, Claim 28 recites a processing unit which processes a substrate which processing unit including station 15 and handling robot 1 is clearly shown in Fig. 1 and disclosed in corresponding portions of the specification. Accordingly, it is believed that Claims 28 through 33 as currently amended fully meet the requirements of 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph.

Claims 22-33 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Applicants' Admitted Prior Art (AAPR) in view of U.S. Patent 5,006,760 (Drake) Claim 27has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over AAPR and Drake as applied to Claims 22-26 and further in view of previously cited U.S. Patent 4,856,904 (Akagawa). With regard to the claims as currently amended, these rejections are respectfully traversed.

Independent Claim 22 as currently amended is directed to a pod capable of including a substrate. The pod is pressed against an electromagnetic shielded chamber of a device manufacturing apparatus which imports the substrate through an opening of the pod and processes the substrate. The pod has walls that form the opening and a lid for the opening. An electromagnetic shield member is provided by the pod walls. At least a portion of the electromagnetic shield member is provided on the walls to contact the electromagnetic shielded chamber so that the electromagnetic shielded member is grounded through the electromagnetic shielded chamber.

Applicant's admitted prior art disclosure has been cited as disclosing a cassette holding plural wafers and a pod providing an inner space to store the cassette.

In Applicant's view, Drake discloses a capacitive feed for the lower electrode in a parallel plate plasma reactor. One plate of the capacitor comprises the lower electrode or a contact to the lower electrode. The other plate of the capacitor comprises an annular member insulated from the lower electrode, or the contact. There are no RF connections directly to the lower electrode. An electromagnetic shield is attached to outside the plate having the lower electrode through resilient members and contacts a grounding ring on the other plate.

According to the invention of Claim 22 as currently amended, a pod, capable of including a substrate, is pressed against an electromagnetic shielded chamber of a device manufacturing apparatus and an electromagnetic shield member provided by walls of the pod has a portion that contacts the electromagnetic shielded chamber so that the electromagnetic shielded member is grounded through the electromagnetic shielded chamber.

Applicant's prior art disclosure relating to Fig. 10, only teaches open cassettes 2 and 3 which are handled in a clean room 100 but fails in any manner to suggest the feature Claim 22 of a pod pressed against an electromagnetic shielded chamber. Drake only shows a plasma reactor which corresponds to a device manufacturing apparatus that does not suggest any pod with a lid for an opening formed by pod walls, a pod pressed against an electromagnetic shielded chamber or importing of a substrate through the opening of the pod as in Claim 22.

Further, neither Applicant's prior art disclosure nor Drake have any disclosure of an electromagnetic shield member provided by the pod walls for grounding through the electromagnetic shielded chamber. Rather, Drake only shows a shield 27 separated from a lower electrode of a chamber by insulators 28 and grounded by ground ring that is separated from the chamber. In Drake, lower electrode 13 on which wafer 14 is placed is not grounded. Accordingly, it is not seen that the addition of Drake's plasma reactor having upper and lower electrodes and a shield isolated from the chamber to Applicant's prior art open cassette disclosure could possible suggest the features of Claim 22 of a pod with a lid for an opening formed by pod walls pressed against an electromagnetic shielded chamber, importing of a substrate through the opening of the pod and a portion of an electromagnetic shield member provided on said walls to contact the electromagnetic shielded chamber to ground. It is therefore believed that Claim 22 as currently amended is completely distinguished from any combination of Applicant's prior art and Drake and is allowable.

Independent Claim 28 as currently amended is directed to apparatus that manufactures a device using a substrate. The apparatus has an electromagnetic shielded chamber. An importing unit imports the substrate through an opening of a pod pressed against the electromagnetic shield member. A processing unit processes the substrate imported by the importing unit. A portion of the electromagnetic shielded chamber against which the pod is to be pressed is grounded.

It is a feature of Claim 28 as currently amended that an importing unit imports a substrate through an opening in a pod pressed against an electromagnetic shielded chamber and another feature that a portion of the electromagnetic shielded chamber against which the pod is pressed is grounded. As discussed with respect to Claim 22, the Applicant's prior art of Fig. 10 only utilizes open cassettes in a device manufacturing apparatus but fails in any manner to suggest importing a substrate through an opening in a pod pressed against an electromagnetic shielded chamber or any grounding of the pod by a pressed portion of the electromagnetic shielded chamber. Drake is restricted to teaching placing of a wafer on the lower electrode of a plasma chamber that is not grounded with no importing through a pod opening or grounding the portion of the electromagnetic chamber against which the pod is pressed. As a result, it is not seen that the addition of Applicant's prior art of open cassettes in a chamber to Drake's wafer placed on the lower electrode of a plasma chamber that is not grounded could possible suggest the combination of the features of Claim 28 of importing a substrate through an opening of a pod pressed against an electromagnetic shielded chamber wherein a portion of the chamber against which the pod is to be pressed is grounded. It is therefore believed that Claim 28 as currently amended is completely distinguished from any combination of Applicant's prior art and Drake

and is allowable.

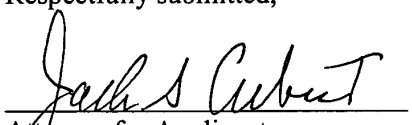
A review of the other art of record has failed to reveal anything which, in Applicant's opinion, would remedy the deficiencies of the art discussed above, as references against the independent claims herein. Those claims are therefore believed patentable over the art of record. Applicant submits that the amendments to independent Claims 22 and 28 clarify Applicant's invention and serve to reduce any issues for appeal.

The other claims in this application are each dependent from one or another of the independent claims discussed above and are therefore believed patentable for the same reasons. Since each dependent claim is also deemed to define an additional aspect of the invention, however, the individual consideration or reconsideration, as the case may be, of the patentability of each on its own merits is respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully requests favorable consideration and reconsideration and early passage to issue of the present application. The Examiner is respectfully requested to enter this Amendment After Final Action under 37 C.F.R. § 1.116.

Applicant's attorney, Steven E. Warner, may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should be directed to our address listed below.

Respectfully submitted,



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